

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 11. (cancelled)

12. (currently amended) A method of making bristle arrangements for subsequent use in a brush seal, comprising the steps of:

arranging a plurality of tufts of bristles each having a bead at one end within a fixture;

said arranging step comprising placing each said tuft in the fixture in a skewed fashion relative to a line extending radially from a center of the fixture;

said arranging step further comprising placing each said tuft in said fixture so that a portion of the bristles forming each tuft with said bead project from said fixture to form a plurality of exposed portions; and

joining said exposed portions together while said tufts are in said fixture using a welding machine so as to form said bristle arrangements.

13. (cancelled)

14. (cancelled)